**For Immediate Release                    Contact:  Caitlin Foreman, Executive Director**

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Friends of Children’s Hospital Announces $1 Million Endowment

**Jackson, Miss. – February 10, 2023:**Friends of Children’s Hospital, together with Children’s of Mississippi, today announced the establishment of the “Dr. Owen B. and Lynn M. Evans Endowed Chair for Pediatric Neurology.”

The endowment fund has been made possible by a $1 million donation from Friends in recognition of Dr. Owen “Bev” Evans’ 30+ years of service to Friends of Children’s Hospital and Children’s of Mississippi. Dr. Colette Parker, Division Chief of Pediatric Neurology, has been appointed as the inaugural holder of the chair position.

Interest income from the endowment will support Dr. Colette’s teaching, research, and service activities in future years.

Dr. Parker said being named the first-ever Dr. Owen B. and Lynn M. Evans Chair of Pediatric Neurology ranks among her most profound professional honors, as Dr. Evans left an immeasurable impact on her own career.

“Dr. Evans was a mentor to me and many other pediatric specialists and subspecialists,” she said. “By helping found Friends of Children’s Hospital, working toward the construction of the Batson Tower, and caring for so many children over his career, he touched the lives of countless Mississippi families. His career has been an inspiration.”

Indeed, spanning more than two decades, Dr. Evans’s service to the hospital was nothing short of transformative–a testament to his unwavering dedication to improving the health of Mississippi’s sick and injured children.

During his 22-year tenure as Chair of Pediatrics at the University of Mississippi Medical Center from 1989 to 2011, he founded Friends of Children’s Hospital, with the goal of one day building a new, state-of-the-art children’s hospital. True to his word, Batson Children’s Hospital officially opened in 1997, the first of its kind in Mississippi.

“Dr. Evans led the children’s hospital when resources were few and the need was immense. It took vision, stubbornness, and his great personality during those days to seek solutions for patients.  These constraints led him to founding Friends of Children’s Hospital in 1989 to grow awareness, volunteerism, and fundraising for the children’s hospital,” said Friends Board Chairman John Scarbrough. “Now 34 years later, Friends continues our all-out pursuit of these values and the vision that Dr. Evans created for the non-profit so many years ago.”

Through Friends of Children’s Hospital, Evans also helped raise millions of dollars for the care and treatment of Mississippi’s youngest and most vulnerable patients. Under Dr. Evans’ guidance, the children’s hospital expanded to include a new surgical wing, emergency room, lobby, cancer clinic and general pediatric clinic. He also fostered several highly successful partnerships with the Junior League of Jackson, the Manning family, and Fondren Renaissance, to name a few.

While Dr. Evan’s list of accomplishments is too lengthy to list and there are no words to adequately describe his tireless devotion to serving Mississippi kids, this new endowment is certainly a wonderful way to memorialize his lasting legacy, said Dr. Mary Taylor, Professor and Suzan Brown Thames Chair of Pediatrics.

“Establishment of the Dr. Owen B. and Lynn M. Evans Chair of Pediatric Neurology is a meaningful way to honor Dr. Evans, who had such an immense impact on pediatrics, and support the mission of Children’s of Mississippi–ultimately helping children with neurological conditions reach their full potential,” she said. “We are so grateful for this generous gift from Friends of Children’s Hospital as a partner in pediatrics.”

“On behalf of the children of Mississippi who have benefitted from Dr. Evans’ leadership, commitment and vision for a healthier, brighter tomorrow, thank you,” said Friends Executive Director Caitlin Foreman. “Whether treating a child with an inoperable brain tumor; spearheading a multi-million-dollar hospital expansion; conducting critical, life-saving clinical research; teaching the next generation of healthcare leaders; or overseeing an entire pediatrics department, Dr. Evans left an immeasurable impact. And with the $1 million endowment in his name, Dr. Evans’ legacy will continue into perpetuity.”

**About Friends of Children’s Hospital**

Friends of Children’s Hospital, founded in 1989 by a group of dedicated volunteers from across the state, supports Mississippi’s only children’s hospital by driving fundraising, growing volunteerism and building awareness. Since its inception more than 30 years ago, the nonprofit organization has raised more than $45 million to purchase state-of-the-art equipment, construct new facilities and provide vitally important services for all pediatric patients. For more information about Friends of Children’s Hospital, please visit [www.friendsofch.org](http://www.friendsofch.org) or email [friends@friendsofch.org](mailto:friends@friendsofch.org).

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